

'For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing (*appearing in glory*) of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.'

Titus 2:11-14

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October 28th, 7pm

Subject: Will there be a Battle of Armageddon?
 Speaker: David McMillan

November 25th, 7pm

Subject: When will there be Peace in Jerusalem?
 Speaker: Richard Monteith

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Watching and Waiting

LIGHT FOR PERILOUS TIMES

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The objects are:

1. To teach the nearing approach of our Lord's return. James 5:8
2. To hold forth the Truth and to expose and resist error. Jude 3
3. To note passing events in the light of 'the Scripture of Truth.' 2 Peter 1:19
4. To unfold the Word of God by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Acts 17:11
5. To encourage missionary endeavour, and all service for Truth. Acts 1:8
6. To comfort and strengthen those who seek to stand with the Lord, apart from abounding lawlessness. 2 Timothy 2:19
7. To call for separation from false ecumenism. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

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Psalm 146

By David Baron

(This message is taken from the magazine entitled 'Rest and Reaping,' March, 1916. Mr Baron preached at a meeting in the Pillar Room on 4th day of the previous month. The article reports Mr Baron's words. We have inserted the verse numbers to assist our readers in appreciating that the message was a commentary or exposition of the whole psalm – Ed.).

The Hebrew Psalter, in which the element of praise is so prominent, concludes with five special psalms which begin and end with the word 'Hallelujah.' The music of these psalms is on an ever-ascending scale, until the climax is reached in the last psalm, in which the word 'praise' occurs thirteen times in the six verses of which it is composed, and which ends by calling upon everything that hath breath to praise the Lord. The theme of this 146th Psalm is the praiseworthiness of our God and the blessedness of putting our trust in Him.

Verse 1: It begins with the word 'Hallelujah,' which is translated 'Praise ye the LORD,' but it need not have been thus translated, for the word is well known and understood in all nations of Christendom. It is a word which has been supplied to us by the Spirit of God, and by means of which we are intended to stir up one another to the holy exercise of praise – as the seraphim in Isaiah 6 cried one unto another and said, 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts.' Believers when they meet together are intended to provoke one another, not only to good works, but also to the praise and worship of God. But no one is in a fit condition to call upon his neighbour to praise God if his own heart is not at the same time conscious of, and overwhelmed with, the praiseworthiness of God, and a sense of His grace and goodness and loving kindness.

'Praise (thou) the LORD, O my soul.' The word is often abused, and spoken, even at meetings, glibly and flippantly, without any consequent life or result in the true worship of God.

Verse 2: The psalmist then tells us of a resolution he has formed – 'While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.' This is an inspired echo of words in Psalm 104:33, 'I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.' These phrases 'while I live,' and 'while I have any being,' are in each case the translation of one word in the original. 'Life' and 'being' have a twofold significance. They mean 'in my life,' and 'as long as life lasts' – and both meanings are intended here – 'while I live,' and 'with all the powers of my life I will praise Jehovah.' While I have any being and with all the powers of my being I will sing praises to God. It reminds us of a similar expression in Psalm 34, 'I will bless the LORD at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth.' Whether as regards continuity of praise and worship or intensity, it is only in the power of the Holy Spirit that we can render fitting praise to God. It is easy to render praise sometimes, but

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only the really spiritual Christian can bless God at all times and in all things.

Verse 3: Then having formed this resolution the psalmist proceeds to enlarge on the blessedness of putting trust in God, and he does so in two ways: first, by showing the futility of trusting man; and, second, by showing the unutterable blessedness of trusting God. ‘Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man in whom there is no help.’ However exalted or high in rank he may be there is no help in any man: he has no salvation even for himself, much less for his neighbour. This is a lesson that all states, all rulers, and all individuals have to learn.

The middle verse in the English Bible is Psalm 118:8, ‘It is better to trust in the LORD than to put (*any*) confidence in man.’ For every form of deliverance and help it is better to trust in Jehovah than in princes.

Verse 4: Then we have a description of man – ‘His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.’ This reminds us of the early chapters of the Book of Genesis, in which we are told of man’s humble origin and the frailty of his nature apart from God – ‘dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.’ God formed man of the dust of the earth, and He reminds him of his natural element. God breathed into him the breath of life, but sin entered in, and death by sin, that awful sentence which hangs over all men, ‘he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish.’ The word ‘thoughts’ means rather schemes, plans, purposes. However cunningly devised and purposed, they shall perish, these plans upon which men spend their lives and to which they sacrifice everything. The only thoughts that will stand are God’s thoughts: the plans and purposes of God are never destroyed. Blessed is the man whose plans are in accord with God. His thoughts and counsels and plans shall never perish.

Verse 5: From the sad thought of the helplessness of mortal man and the transitoriness of human life and uselessness of plans apart from God, the music of the psalm rises to more melodious heights, and tells of the happiness of the man whose hope is in God. This beatitude occurs twenty-five times in the psalms. Sometimes the word is rendered ‘blessed’ and sometimes ‘happy.’ Here it is really in the plural, ‘Oh the blessednesses of the man that hath the God of Jacob for his help.’ What a beautiful juxtaposition of names, ‘the God of Jacob.’

God’s names set forth His Divine attributes, His character. The first name here is ‘El.’ It describes the God of might and majesty. When spoken of in relation to creation, He is called ‘Elohim.’ Here is man’s helplessness and weakness linked with God’s Almighty. It reminds us of the all-sufficiency of God’s grace, even for such an one as Jacob, the crooked one, the perverse one. ‘Jacob’ in the Bible stands not only for the man, but for the nation, the whole Jewish people. Just as God dealt with Jacob, so He dealt with the people of Israel in His persevering grace. In spite of all Jacob’s crookedness, God transformed him into Israel, a prince; and the history of the Jewish nation testifies to God’s love for, and patience with, them in spite of their crookedness. This nation shall also be turned into Israel having power with God and with men. This blessedness is emphasised in verses 3-4, faith in God against faith in man. The word ‘Jehovah’ stands for the self-existent, unchangeable, everlasting, covenant-keeping

God. It is His personal Name. The name of Jehovah is the pledge of God's faithfulness, the certainty of His promises.

Verse 6: All the rest of the psalm is a kind of paraphrase of these two names. God is Almighty 'which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is.' Is that a sufficient foundation to trust in God, as far as His power is concerned? It is an echo of Psalm 33 - 'Let all the earth fear the LORD ... for He spake, and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast.' God has only to utter His creative word, and that which He wills stands forth out of nothing. God's omnipotence is revealed to us in the work of creation but He is not only the Almighty. He is also the faithful God, Jehovah 'which keepeth truth for ever.' We can trust in Him, for He will never fail.

Verse 7: He is also the righteous God, 'which executeth judgment for the oppressed.' His power is always directed against evil, and in the end He will crush it. 'Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceedingly small.' By His almighty power He will vindicate justice and righteousness on earth. He is beneficent, 'He giveth food to the hungry,' and He gives to souls the Bread of Life. 'The LORD lootheth the prisoners.' God brought Israel out of Egypt and gave them bread in the wilderness.

Verse 8: 'He openeth the eyes of the blind.' Jehovah loveth the righteous, not with the general love of compassion to all mankind, but with the love of complacency to all who love Him. 'The eye of the LORD is upon them that hope in His mercy.'

Verse 9: 'Jehovah preserveth the strangers.' Let us see to it that we are not carried away by the terrible spirit which the men of the world exhibit to the alien in our midst; let us remember to treat them as we should like to be treated in a strange land. The way of the wicked, Jehovah turneth upside down.

Verse 10: Jehovah shall reign for ever, and He shall bring His people to the holy hill of Zion, and bring blessing and salvation to the people of Israel.

Conclusion

All these attributes of God enumerated here are personified in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus fed the hungry and gave sight to the blind. All God's attributes were manifested in His acts on earth, and as He did His mighty works He led the people's thoughts to higher things. 'Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life.' He opened the eyes of the blind as a commentary on His declaration, 'I am the Light of the world.' He is not only 'Salvator,' but 'Consolator.' 'Come unto Me ... and I will give you rest.'

By and by this true King shall reign for ever and ever, and meanwhile as our Lord manifested the character of Jehovah on earth so we must manifest Christ in this world. As He was the Light of the world, so we must be the light of the world. What is our attitude to the sick and suffering? By seeing our works, the world judges God and will be converted to Him.

(For an excellent commentary on the whole Book of Psalms, we would recommend the two volume set by William de Burgh, obtainable from ourselves at £30, post free - Ed.).

The Bible: Its Divine Origin

By Adolph Saphir

(This article has been taken from a booklet with the above title. We give just one section which is headed 'Prophecy,' in which Dr Saphir shows that prophetic revelation is a proof of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures).

Scripture contains predictions which have been fulfilled. These predictions are marvellous, both on account of their comprehensive grandeur, containing great historical outlines and principles, and on account of their circumstantial and minute detail. The one was beyond the mind of the prophets, the other beyond their calculation.

The element of prediction in Scripture has been lately undervalued, and under the specious plea that the moral and spiritual, the ethical element in the prophets, is the chief thing. This is a confusion of ideas. All prediction in Scripture is ethical, or rather spiritual, because it refers to the kingdom of God, and to its centre – Christ. But the spiritual element is intimately connected with the facts, the continued manifestations and gifts of God unto His people. That Scripture prediction is throughout ethical, that it differs from all soothsaying, from the foretelling of isolated events and incidents to satisfy curiosity; that it is organically connected with the Divine education of Israel, full of principles, warning, guidance, and encouragement for the people to whom it is given, ought to be perfectly plain to every reader of the Bible. But equally clear it is, that Scripture predicts events which none could have foreseen. How could the thought enter into Abram's mind, or even into the mind of Moses, that in Abram's seed all families of the earth should be blessed? What a marvellous conception! It is impossible to account for it, except on the ground of a direct revelation. In Scripture prediction the ethical element is inseparable from the facts; the facts are the revelation of God, educating and comforting His people.

Let us consider only one great subject of prediction, the history of the Lord Jesus Christ. The whole life of the Saviour, from His birth to His ascension and His sending forth the Spirit, may be narrated in the words of Moses and the prophets. Without referring to the four evangelists, the whole history of Christ in its great outlines, as well as its minute particulars, has been foretold by the Spirit through the Scripture.

We ask first concerning His birth. And Genesis 3 informs us, that He is to be emphatically the seed of the woman; while Isaiah teaches us that the mother of the Saviour, the great Immanuel, is to be a virgin, and that this Child thus born, this Son given unto us, is the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

We inquire further. Whose Son is the Messiah to be? The Scripture points out Shem, for 'Japheth shall dwell in the tents of Shem'; and still further we are directed to Abram, and still further to Isaac (as distinguished from Ishmael), and still further to Jacob: and from among the twelve sons of Jacob, the patriarch on his deathbed singles out the tribe of Judah; out of him shall come Shiloh, and to Him shall be the gathering of the nations.

But Scripture is still more definite. The son of Jesse, even David, receives the promise of the great King and Redeemer. Thus we know that the Messiah is God and man; born of a woman, even of a virgin; a Sethite; a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; of the tribe of Judah; of the house of David.

Where is He to be born? Like the wise men from the east, we would naturally suppose in Jerusalem, the holy city, the city of the great King. But Micah knows differently, and points out Bethlehem Ephratah, little among the thousands of Judah: 'Out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.'

When is He to be born? Jacob predicts the period: 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come,' and Daniel more definitely speaks of seventy periods of seven which are to elapse from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, before the coming of the Messiah the Prince.

Born in Bethlehem, He is to be taken into Egypt; as Hosea saith, 'I have called My Son out of Egypt.'

What is to prepare the world for His coming? What great event is to announce His advent? Isaiah and Malachi tell us it is to be a man, a messenger, 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'

What is to be His character? 'Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him. He shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench.'

What is to be His work? 'He shall open the eyes of the blind, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. The lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing.'

What is His preaching? 'The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Him, because He hath anointed Him to preach good tidings unto the meek.' 'The Lord GOD hath given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary; He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.'

How will the people receive Him? How will the rulers and guides of the nation welcome Him? 'He is despised and rejected of men.' The builders reject the stone.

Is He to appear as Jerusalem's king? and in what manner? Zechariah tells us: 'Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.'

What is to be the end of His life on earth? Daniel tells us He shall be 'cut off.'

Who is to deliver Him into the hands of His enemies? The psalmist tells us, one of His friends, he that eateth bread with Him; and Zechariah states that for thirty pieces of silver He shall be betrayed.

Will His disciples stand by Him in His last sufferings? No; the Shepherd is smitten, and the sheep of the flock are scattered.

How is He to die? He is the Lamb; and is to suffer a slow, painful death, and not a bone of His body is to be broken. Moses teaches us that His blood is to be shed, and

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that He is to be lifted up as the serpent in the wilderness. Zechariah adds another feature of His sufferings: He is to be pierced. No other mode but that of crucifixion fulfils all these descriptions.

What further happened during His crucifixion? Psalm 22 tells us: 'All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the LORD that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him. I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and My tongue cleaveth to My jaws. They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture.'

What further circumstances attend His death? 'He opened not His mouth.' 'He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.' 'He was numbered with the transgressors.'

Why did He suffer? Isaiah answers: 'He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and by His stripes we are healed.'

Was it only man who caused His sufferings? Isaiah saith, 'It pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief;' and Zechariah saith, 'Awake, O sword, against the Man that is mine equal; smite the Shepherd.' And in the words of David His soul is to cry, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ?'

Is He to remain in the grave? David says 'Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption;' 'The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner;' while Jonah's history prophesies the same; and Hosea speaks of the third day as the day of revival.

And after His resurrection? Psalm 68 says, 'Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.' And in another psalm it is written, 'The LORD said unto My Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.'

Thus we have the life of Christ in Moses and the prophets. (*See Genesis 3:15; 9:26-27; 12:3; 17:20-21; 49:8-10; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 11:1-10; 2 Samuel 7; Micah 5:2; Daniel 9; Hosea 11:1; Isaiah 40 and Malachi 3; Isaiah 42; 35; 41; 53; Zechariah 11:13; 12:10; 13:7; Psalm 41:9; Exodus 12:46; Psalms 22; 16; 68:18; 110:1; 118:22-23.*)

The picture of the Messiah in its grand outlines was quite above the conception of Israel, and even of the prophets, at any time. Even after the fulfilment it was new to the people, different from their ideas, high above their thoughts and expectations. And as for the circumstantial fulfilment of the wonderful detail, who can explain it on natural principles?

The prophets spake of the grace of God, as the Spirit revealed unto them the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Theirs was not the insight of great minds into future history, based on their profound knowledge of the present. It was a Divine prediction of events intimately connected with the kingdom of God. It was not in accordance with the ordinary laws which govern the history of the world, but in harmony with the laws of the Divine kingdom as they had already partially become manifest, and as they were more fully to be unfolded in the future. The events which

are singled out are not those which would strike man as especially important; while events which by us are regarded as the most influential are often passed over with silence. But in the great day it will be seen that prophecy throws more light on history than history on prophecy.

These considerations are sufficient to show that the Scripture prediction is essentially spiritual, and inseparably connected with its whole teaching and history. It may be added, that although the people to whom the prophecy was addressed, and even the prophets themselves, did not fully understand the things signified by the Spirit, yet the prophecy was always connected with the peculiar history, trial, and difficulty of the people at the time; so that it was a warning to the ungodly, guidance and encouragement to the God-fearing, and a new test which separated the precious from the vile. (Thus Isaiah 40-46; Daniel 9, etc.).

As miracle is the intervention of God's grace in act, prophecy is the intervention of God's grace in testimony. Both appear on the background of man's failure; both are intended by the Divine wisdom, which educates His children and rules the world, as a help and consolation to the flock, and the hardening of the wicked.

But prophecy – and this is our chief point here – is a proof of the Divine origin of Scripture. Its force is, unlike that of a miracle, not dependent on the credibility of testimony. It is its own evidence. It is fulfilled before the eyes of the world. The Jews, Tyre, Babylon, Nineveh, demonstrate to all who have eyes to see that we have a sure word of prophecy, and that the mouth of the Lord hath spoken. The words of the prophets find their best explanation in the actual condition of the nations and lands of which they spake; and all men may see it, that the Lord God, who alone can see the end from the beginning, hath revealed these things to His servants the prophets.

The most striking fulfilment of prophecy is seen in the existence of the Jewish nation. Forty centuries have run their course since the first promise of the nation was given unto Abram. As Balaam predicted, the people dwell alone, and are not reckoned among the nations. While the ancient Egyptians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Romans – the mightiest nations the world ever saw – have disappeared, Israel lives, and has survived all the fearful calamities and persecutions which came upon them. Driven from their own land, dispersed among the nations, for centuries denied the privilege of possessing land, subjected to insult, robbery, and persecutions of the greatest cruelty, they still exist, numerous, energetic, in vigour of body and mind, mysterious alike in their preservation as in their isolated position. In the midst of the numerous changes which have occurred in the history of nations, Israel is the historical nation, or, as Isaiah calls his people, 'the everlasting people' (Isaiah 44:7, Hebrew.); a witness of the sacred history recorded in Scripture, a pledge of the fulfilment of a yet greater and more glorious Theocracy. And when the metaphysical subtleties as well as the refined secularism of our age turn with aversion from all direct interference of God, whether in the past as recorded in the history, or in the future as recorded in the prophecy of Scripture, the Jews are a living sign and irrefutable evidence of the truth of the Bible. Miracle and prophecy find in them their living monuments. No wonder that the greatest philosopher of our age (Hegel) felt the Jewish history a dark and perplexing enigma. It is the miracle of History as it is the history of Miracle; its exposition is Jesus Christ, the

Son of God, the Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel.

A living God, as distinguished from idols, whether the idols of heathenism or the idol of the abstract god of philosophy, appeals to this as one of His attributes, that He revealeth future things. 'Bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth and show us what shall happen: show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.' And again, 'Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them' (Isaiah 41:21-23; 45:18-21; 48:5, 14-16). Even the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, a heathen, exclaimed, 'Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret.'

Thus prophecy is declared by the Lord Himself to be a manifestation and evidence of His wonderful wisdom and infinite supremacy, as sent in order to prove to us that He is dealing with us, and also to fortify us against the claims of error. Common, unsophisticated, natural sense will receive prophecy as a sure mark of supernatural authority, and it has been only the perverse ingenuity and pseudo-spiritualism of our age, which, from the dreamy height of its speculative wisdom, has spoken with half-contemptuous vagueness of prophecy as an evidence of the truth of Scripture.

And every fulfilment of the events predicted, whether that fulfilment be recorded in Scripture itself (as the prophecy about the captivity of Babylon, Cyrus, etc.), or recorded in the annals of history (as the destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews, etc.), renders to us 'more sure' the word of prophecy; so that we look forward with the firm expectation that the Lord God will do nothing but make manifest the secret which He hath revealed unto His servants the prophets, while we are most fully convinced that the Scripture contains the things which the Lord hath spoken, attested as it is by the mark given by God, through Moses, for our guidance and assurance (Deuteronomy 18:20-22).

The Gospel of the Grace of God

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By Dr Cecil Yates Biss

(Continued from page 109).

A few remarks may now be added upon some passages which speak in general terms of 'all,' 'all men,' 'every man,' and similar general expressions, in connection with the extent of the Atonement. And here it may be said, as an introductory remark, that in Scripture, as in ordinary speech, the word 'all' is frequently used, without being open to any reasonable ground of objection, as expressive of a generality limited by the nature of a context either expressed or implied. When Paul said 'All seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's' (Philippians 2:21), how obvious it is that he meant a number of persons belonging to what was after all a very small circle, namely, certain

selfish Christians known to himself and his readers. If a person were suddenly heard to say that 'all had perished,' before his meaning could be apprehended he would have to explain the context that existed in his mind, namely, whether it were all of the army, all of the regiment, all of the company, or of yet a smaller band, to whom his words had reference. These observations will show that in the interpretation of Scripture strict regard must be had to the context, expressed or implied, before a general expression can be rightly understood.

Take as an example, although not in direct connection with the subject of Atonement, 1 Corinthians 15:22, 'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' The first 'all' refers of course to all men without exception, but the second 'all' does not, for the next verse defines the 'all' who are 'made alive in Christ' as, '*They that are Christ's at His coming.*' We see, then, that the force of the passage is this: 'For as in Adam all (*who are connected with him as their head*) die, even so in Christ, all (*who are connected with Him as their Head*) shall be made alive;' and this passage, the meaning of which is so clear, is a good instance of how unlimited expressions in Scripture frequently have, in virtue of their contexts, a restricted meaning.

The explanation just given elucidates the interpretation of an important verse in Romans 5. 'Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.' The 'all men' in the first case are of course all men without exception; but the 'all men' in the second case, upon whom the free gift has come 'unto justification of life' are not all men without exception, but only 'all men' who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, as defined in verse 17. Fairness of interpretation compels the observance of the parallelism; and, besides this, if the effort be made to extend the reference of the expression 'all men' in the last clause of the 18th verse, to all men in the world without exception, how can it be truthfully said that 'the free gift had come upon them unto justification of life'? Are all men without exception justified? Are all men alive unto God? The whole Epistle answers, No. We see, therefore, that the phrase 'all men' of the last clause of the 18th verse does not signify all the men in the world, but only those 'many' out of the 'all' men in the world who 'were made righteous by the obedience of One.' It must be said that if this distinction be disregarded, an escape from Universalism is impossible.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15. 'If One died for all, then were all dead, and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again.' This passage, as above translated, does not state, however, that Christ died for all, but rather that all for whom He died were previously dead, though the sense is not very clear. But the word 'all' possessing in the Original the definite article, must be translated 'the whole,' so that the translation should run thus: 'If One died for the whole (*company represented*) then did the whole (*of that company*) die' (die, that is, in the representative sense), 'and that they who live' – or rather, 'these now living' - should not live unto themselves, but 'unto Him, who, in their stead, died and rose again.' In this case again the obvious reference of the passage is to all believers, and to believers only, as those who have died with Christ, and risen with Him, as their great Representative; and it furnishes another example that the use of the

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expression 'all' is frequently one of general reference within obviously restricted limits.

Isaiah 53:6. 'All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.' This is a passage often quoted in this connection, and is usually taken to affirm the universality of Atonement. If, however, the full scope of the chapter be considered it will easily be seen that the reference is not a general one to men as men, but to the People of Israel, and that at the time of their national conversion at the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The chapter shows by internal evidence that it is the language of the repentant and forgiven nation in that yet future day; and similar passages may be found and compared at Isaiah 12, Isaiah 25:1, Isaiah 26:1-18; all of which are prophetic expressions of the penitence, and faith, and joy of forgiveness, which *will* become Israel's experience when the promises of Zechariah 12:10-14, 13:1, are fulfilled. Such is no doubt the true interpretation of this chapter, but even to the judgment of those who may not accept futurist views, the necessity of the application of the text quoted to BELIEVERS, as such, will readily appear. The meaning of the expression 'the iniquity of us all,' is clearly defined by the words of the eighth verse, 'For the transgression of My people was He stricken;' and this forbids us to think the 'we' and 'us' of the 6th verse are words which refer to all men alike.

Hebrews 2:9. 'That He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.' This text, like the preceding one, is constantly quoted as an affirmation of the universal extent of the Atonement, but it can only be so applied if taken without any reference to its context. A clearer affirmation of the restriction of Atonement to the Family of Faith does not exist in Scripture. If the chapter be examined as a whole it will be found that it sets forth the work of the Lord as the Redeemer of His people, a work which is described as the 'bringing many sons unto glory,' and which He as the 'Captain of their salvation' effectuated by being made 'perfect through sufferings.' They who are redeemed, and for every one of whom 'He tasted death,' are described by seven names: namely, 'many sons,' 'they who are sanctified,' 'my brethren,' 'the Church,' 'the children,' 'the seed of Abraham,' 'the people' (Hebrews 2:9-18); and it is for this body of persons, as distinguished from other men, that He is stated to have died. The Greek word used in the 9th verse and rendered 'every man,' is not one which could be intelligibly translated without reference to its context, for there is no term in the original corresponding to 'man' but only the distributive pronoun 'every;' and this would here be better translated 'each' with an implied reference to what follows. If the passage be looked at in this light it will be seen that the 9th verse is really an introductory statement, subsequently expanded in the rest of the chapter, and that its force is this – 'We see Jesus, made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour' – that is, made a little 'lower than the angels' by the assumption of humanity, in order 'that He, by the grace of God' towards sinners who were to be redeemed, should taste death for each of them: for 'it became God,' that is, it was in befitting accordance with the purpose and plan of the divine salvation, that, 'in bringing many sons to glory, the Captain of their salvation should be perfected through sufferings' – that is that He should 'taste death' for each of the 'many sons' of that redeemed family. Verses 11 to 18 are only the expression of this thought in greater

detail. Especially should the force of two of the phrases used in these verses be observed: - 'The Seed of Abraham,' 'The People;' for 'The Seed of Abraham' (see Galatians 3) is an expression which emphatically signifies not men as men, but only of believing men; and the words 'The People' (verse 17) are brought down from that Old Testament usage in which they signified Israel as distinguished from the nations at large, and used here to indicate the relation of the atoning Priesthood of Christ to His People as distinguished from the World.

1 Timothy 2:6. 'Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.' This passage has been left to the end of the enquiry with the view to it being more readily understood in the light of the foregoing considerations. In approaching its examination the reader will now have no difficulty in perceiving that it presents another example of the principle already noted, namely, that general expressions must not be interpreted more widely than their context permits. The context here begins at the 1st verse, 'I exhort therefore, that ... supplications ... be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority,' etc. It can readily be seen from this mode of expression that 'all men' were before the mind of the Apostle, not in a general and indefinite manner, but as divided into those ranks and classes of which society is made up, commencing with the highest, 'kings, and those that are in authority:' in other words, he directs us to pray for all classes of men, and supplies kings and governors as examples suggestive of the rest. (Compare Titus 2:11, where the words 'all men' seem to be used as a general expression summing up the various classes of men previously mentioned, even down to the 'slaves' of verse 10). The passage, therefore, seems to view men not in an individual manner, but rather distributively as belonging to various classes – not 'all men' **without exception**, but rather 'all men' **without distinction** – not 'all men' as the total of individuals, but rather all kinds of men, in the sense of persons belonging to all ranks and grades of life. Further conviction may be gained that this view is the true one by comparing the words of the 4th verse, 'Who will have all men to be saved;' it being certain that whatever sense attaches to the expression 'all men' in this verse must be the same as in the 1st verse. Now, it may be asked, is it in Scripture declared to be the will of God that all men without exception should be saved? Were this so how could any be lost? Every passage that draws a distinction between the Elect of God and those who perish, implies that God does not *will* the salvation of all men without exception. By this it is not intended to say that God wills the destruction of any man apart from His righteous condemnation of men as sinners, for while the doctrine of *Election* is found in many places of Scripture the doctrine of a purely arbitrary *Reprobation* is found nowhere. See, for example, Romans 9:22-23, where impenitent sinners called 'vessels of wrath fitted to destruction' are not described as having been so 'fitted' by God – and indeed were this true it would be incomprehensible how He could have 'endured them with much long suffering' – but 'fitted' thus as the result and outcome of their own sin; while the 'vessels of mercy' are described as having been 'before prepared unto glory' by God Himself. God is not the author of man's destruction, otherwise it could not be true in any sense that He 'would have all men to be saved,' but yet had He decreed the salvation of ALL MEN, as Scripture informs us He has decreed the salvation of all His Elect, then indeed all men would be saved: this, however, would be universal salvation,

a doctrine forbidden by the Word of God. On the other hand, if the view which has been suggested of the 1st verse is correct – if the words ‘all men’ which occur there are really used in the sense of ‘all kinds of men’ – then the meaning of verse 4 is clear, for there is no class nor nation of men from which God’s electing mercy has not chosen some, if not many, examples; and though ‘not many mighty, not many noble are called,’ it is not said that ‘not any mighty or noble are called.’ We may be sure, therefore, that, in all periods of the world’s history, some of high station in this world, as well as some of ‘the poor of this world,’ have formed part of the elect Church of God. According to this view of verses 1 and 4 the meaning of verse 6 will be clear, for the words ‘for all’ must bear there the same sense as in the preceding verses: and this is no doubt true. The instruction of the chapter, then, runs thus: God’s people are exhorted to pray for all ranks and classes and kinds of men, because He willeth that all kinds of men should be saved, and Christ gave Himself a ransom not for men of any one class or kind, but for all kinds alike. By the nature of its context, therefore, and also by the general harmony of the doctrinal teaching of Scripture elsewhere, the phrase ‘who gave Himself a ransom for all,’ is shown to be, not the expression of an unlimited and universal Atonement, but the presentation of that truth in such a way as to admit of its application to all kindreds and nations and peoples and tongues, as also to all the classes into which human society is divided.

(To be continued)

Be True

By Horatius Bonar

Thou must be true thyself,
If thou the truth wouldest teach;
Thy soul must overflow, if thou
Another soul wouldest reach;
It needs the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech.

Think truly, and thy thoughts
Shall the world’s famine feed;
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed.

‘The Grace of God was upon Him’

(Luke 2:40)

SAVING Grace - **Pardon** (Ephesians 1:7; 2:5; Romans 3:24-25).

SANCTIFYING Grace - **Peace** (1 Corinthians 1:2-3; Romans 1:7; 16:20).

SUFFICIENT Grace - **Power** (2 Corinthians 12:9; Colossians 1:11).

SUPPLICATING Grace - **Prayer** (Zechariah 12:10; Romans 8:26; Hebrews 4:16).

Special Offer

Following a series of expositions a few years ago at the monthly meetings of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony which were on the subject of ‘God’s Purpose for Nations,’ these messages were printed in booklet form – size A6. The countries considered were (1) British Isles, (2) Egypt, (3) Gaza, (4) Greece, (5) Iran, (6) Iraq, (7) Israel (past), (8) Israel (future), (9) Jordan, (10) Lebanon, (11) Libya, and (12) Syria. We still have some of these booklets which are available at 40p each or £3 the set. However, some friends may like to use them instead of greeting cards as they all give useful Biblical teaching about the various nations. It is so helpful to reflect on what God has said. To this end, we are prepared to supply 6 sets for £15; or give greater reductions for additional sets. As there are 12 booklets in a set, 6 sets would make a total of 72, and that means that each booklet is less than 21p – probably far less costly than what would be paid for seasonal greeting cards. Application for these valuable publications should be made to the S.G.A.T. secretary.

Book Review

The Return of Jesus Christ – The Christian’s (half-forgotten) hope, by Ian Hutchings, paperback, 342 pages.

When we were asked to review this book we anticipated, from the title, that it was a work encouraging people to study the doctrine of the Second Coming – and prophetic truth in general. However, it seems that the main thrust of the book is an endeavour to try to prove the soul-sleep theory. Space does not permit us to comment on all the suggestions made but suffice it to say that if soul-sleep is true, why ever did the Lord Jesus, who is the Prince of preachers, not make that clear when he spoke of Lazarus and the rich man, as recorded in Luke 16:19-31? Incidentally, there have been many dear believers associated with the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony over the past 104

years, and others in earlier days who have held to that which the SGAT teaches, and they have definitely believed that saints go to heaven when they die; so we cannot see that our belief hinders any interest in, and love for, Second Advent Truth.

God has a Plan for the World: ‘The plans of unregenerate men have failed, but few have taken the trouble to find out whether God has a plan. The mind and purposes of God are revealed in the Bible. The Holy Scriptures contain marvellous and detailed teachings about the Golden Age for which we are longing, and which is definitely to be established upon the earth. In view of the fact that the Bible has been available for men to study for hundreds of years, and that all the plans of men have persistently failed, how strange that the revelation of God’s Word upon matters of so great moment have been particularly ignored by thinking men and women in the most civilised lands. Through ignorance they know no comfort or assurance for these bewildering days. From the Bible, however, we can obtain a broad outline of what God will accomplish in the world. He is going to establish a new order, glorious, and yet awesome, inasmuch as it will reveal to mankind the utter follies of the centuries of rejection of the One destined by God to be the Prince of Peace and Lord of Lords. Let us therefore consider what the Bible teaches us about this amazing reign of Christ over this very earth.’

(taken from ‘God’s New Order’ by Frank H H Kingsbury – obtainable from ourselves)

Subscription Forms: When sending the last issue of the year, we usually include a subscription form with the magazine. We know that many of our readers have busy lives and do not find it easy to write letters, and the form is accordingly included for the use of such. Some friends have already sent, but if this is the case, the form can be used at a later date. We would again express our thanks to the many friends who give so generously to the Lord’s work through the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony.

S.G.A.T. Meetings: Arrangements have been made, God willing, for meetings of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony to be held in 2023, and the theme for the year to be ‘The Prophecy of Zechariah.’ This is an important book in the canon of Holy Scripture and we trust that friends will be interested in this prophecy, and come to our meetings, which we expect to hold on the fourth Friday of each month except August and December. The Spring Conference is in April and the Autumn Conference in September, when we have afternoon meetings at 4.p.m. in addition to the usual evening meetings. All evening meetings are at 7.p.m. The dates proposed for the meetings are January 27, February 24, March 24, April 28 (conference), May 26, June 23, July 28, September 22 (conference), October 27, and November 24. Please insert the details in your diary and arrange to be present, and bring others with you.